Gateway National Recreation Area News

For Immediate Release

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Date: June 11, 2019

Sandy Hook Foundation Cancels 2019 Summer Concert Series

Highlands, N.J. – A piping plover nest was discovered at Sandy Hook's Beach E the week of June 3. This location has traditionally been used for the Sandy Hook Foundation's summer beach concert series. However, noise disturbs piping plovers, a federally-protected shore bird. US Fish and Wildlife Service mandates that no activity such as concerts take place within 1000 meters of the nest. In order to fulfill the park's legal obligations and give the birds the greatest chance possible at nesting success, this year's concert series has been cancelled.

"We want these special birds to thrive," said Gateway Superintendent Jen Nersesian. "The park did try to find an alternative location, but could not identify anything that meets the Foundation's needs or the spirit of what this program has become. We are disappointed right alongside our visitors, but appreciate everyone's support in helping to save a species on the brink."

All along the Atlantic coast there are fewer than 3000 nesting pairs of plovers. This year, piping plovers have built more than 20 nests on Sandy Hook's beaches. Over the last 10 years Sandy Hook has consistently supported 40-50 % of the N.J. nesting plover pairs. Of the 145 chicks that fledged in NJ in 2018, 59 were from Sandy Hook nests.

About Gateway National Recreation Area
Gateway is a large diverse urban park with 27,000 acres spanning Sandy Hook in N.J. and Jamaica Bay and Staten Island in N.Y. It offers green spaces, beaches, wildlife and outdoor recreation, all alongside historic structures and cultural landscapes. It is the 4th most visited National Park Service unit with

more than 9.2 million annual visitors. For more information about Gateway, visit www.nps.gov/gate.

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